

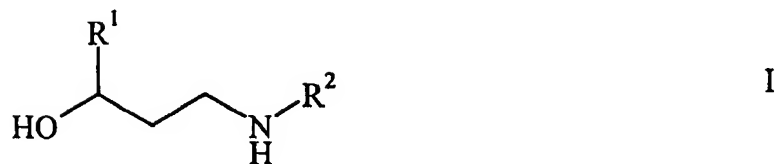
The Abstract

The Abstract Of The Disclosure is submitted herewith on a separate page (in the Appendix).

Appendix

ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A process for the preparation of a compound of formula:



and/or an addition salt of a proton acid, wherein R¹ and R² in each represents, e.g., alkyl. The process includes:

(a) reacting a mixture of (i) a methyl ketone of formula (IV), and

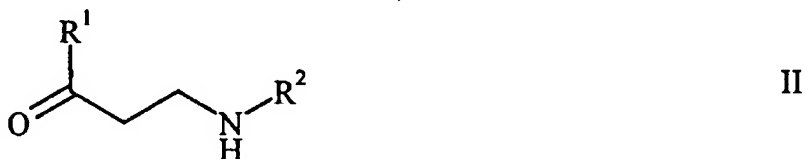


(ii) a compound of formula:



and/or an addition salt of a proton acid, and

(iii) formaldehyde or a source of formaldehyde, in the presence of a solvent, such as, water or aliphatic alcohols and optionally a proton acid, to provide a β -amino ketone of formula:



and/or an addition salt of a proton acid, and (b) reducing the carbonyl group said β -amino ketone to provide a compound of formula I, and/or an addition salt of a proton acid, wherein the first step is carried out at a pressure above 1.5 bar.